

you one example that I think refutes that on another topic. One of the biggest disappointments I've had as President, a bitter disappointment for me, is that I could not sign in good conscience the treaty banning landmines, because we have done more since I've been President to get rid of landmines than any country in the world by far. We spend half the money the world spends on demining. We have destroyed over a million of our own mines.

I couldn't do it because the way the treaty was worded was unfair to the United States and to our Korean allies in meeting our responsibilities along the DMZ in South Korea and because it outlawed our antitank mines while leaving every other country's intact. And I thought it was unfair.

But it just killed me. But all of us who are in charge of the Nation's security engage our heads, as well as our hearts. Thinking and feeling lead you to the conclusion that this treaty should be ratified.

Every single serious question that can be raised about this kind of bomb, that kind of bomb, what this country has, what's going on here, there, and yonder—every single one of them can be dealt with in the safeguard structure that is normally a product of every serious treaty deliberation in the United States Senate. And I say again, from the time of President Eisenhower, the United States has led the world in the cause of non-proliferation. We have new, serious proliferation threats that our predecessors have not faced. And it is all the more imperative that we do everything we possibly can to minimize the risks our children will face.

That is what you were trying to do. I thank the Senators who are here with us today and pray that they can swell their ranks by next week.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:43 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator and astronaut John Glenn, who introduced the President; former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, USA (Ret.), Gen. Davis C. Jones, USA (Ret.), and Gen. William J. Crowe, Jr., USN (Ret.); and Nobel Prize for Physics recipients Charles H. Townes (1964), Noram F. Ramsey (1989), and Val L. Fitch (1980).

Statement on the London Commuter Train Crash

October 6, 1999

I want to offer my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of those who were injured or killed in yesterday's train crash in London. This incident was particularly tragic because it happened in such an everyday setting—as commuters headed towards another day at work. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Americans who were among the injured, and all the victims and their families.

Proclamation 7234—General Pulaski Memorial Day, 1999

October 6, 1999

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

In the more than two centuries that have passed since the signing of our Declaration of Independence, America has grown from a struggling democracy into the most powerful Nation on earth. But today, even as we enter the new century as a proud, prosperous, and free people, we must never forget those friends who cast their lot with us when the outcome of our bid for independence was unclear. Among those to whom we owe such a debt of gratitude is General Casimir Pulaski of Poland, who gave his life for our freedom on a Revolutionary War battlefield 220 years ago this month.

Casimir Pulaski had scarcely reached adulthood when he joined his father and brothers in the struggle for sovereignty for their native Poland. Though the Polish forces were skilled in battle, neighboring empires outnumbered and defeated them, and Pulaski himself was forced into exile. But soon the young soldier answered another call for freedom—this time on behalf of the fledgling United States of America. He distinguished himself in his first military engagement in our War for Independence, and the Continental Congress immediately commissioned him as a brigadier general and assigned him to command the cavalry of the Continental Army. Fighting with characteristic valor and